

Message Text

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PAGE 01 BRUSSE 12754 281619Z
ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SS-15 PM-04 L-03 CIAE-00 INR-07 NSAE-00
EURE-00 /042 W
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P R 281425Z DEC 76
FM AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS
TO SECDEF WASHDC PRIORITY
DSAA WASHDC
INFO SECSTATE WASHDC 8695
USCINCEUR
ASD/YP WPAFB OH

C O N F I D E N T I A L BRUSSELS 12754

FOR GEN HUYSER, GEN FISH & COL PRESTON FROM COL LAWRENCE, ODC.

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: MASS, BE, US
SUBJECT: F-16 DRAFT LOA

REF: BRUSSELS 201608Z DEC 76

1. MET WITH GEN DEDEURWAERDER FOR APPROX ONE HOUR YESTERDAY
27 DEC TO DISCUSS DRAFT LOA. FOLLOWING PARAGRAPHS COVER HIS
COMMENTS:

2. PAYMENT SCHEDULE FORWARDED WITH MOST RECENT DRAFT LOA
(DELIVERED 21 DEC 76) WILL PLACE BAF IN SHORTFALL POSITION
THRU 1980-81. ALTHOUGH GEN DEDEURWAERDER DID NOT MENTION A
FIGURE, HE DID STATE THAT THE SHORTFALL WAS STILL IN THE
RANGE HE DISCUSSED WITH ME EARLIER (REFTEL PARA A. 350-400
MILLION).

3. GEN DEDEURWAERDER CONSIDERS THE PAYMENT SCHEDULE TO BE
THE MOST IMPORTANT ISSUE TO BE COVERED IN THE 6 JAN MEETING
AT THE PENTAGON. HE WOULD HOPE TO ADDRESS THIS ISSUE AS EARLY
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AS POSSIBLE.

4. GEN DEDEURWAERDER HAS DISCUSSED THE PAYMENT SCHEDULE
PROBLEM WITH THE MOD AND HIS STAFF AND AS A RESULT
WILL COME TO THE JAN MEETING WITH VERY SPECIFIC GUIDE-
LINES. HANDED DOWN TO HIM BY THE MOD. ALTHOUGH HE

REPEATED ON AT LEAST FIVE OCCASSIONS HIS AND HIS GOVERNMENT'S POSITIVE APPROACH TO THE ISSUE, IHE WAS NOT OPTIMISTIC THAT AN EASY SOLUTION WOULD BE FOUND. HE RE-EMPHASIZED THE CURRENT TIGHT BUDGET SITUATION IN THE BAF AND THE VERY LIMITED TO NON-EXISTANT POLITICAL OPPORTUNITIES AVAILABLE TO THE MOD TO SECURE ADDTIONAL FUNDING FROM PARLIAMENT.

5. GEN DEDEURWAERDER BELIEVES PAYMENT SCHEDULE PROBLEM WILL BE BEYOND HIS GUIDELINE LIMITS AND CONSEQUENTLY WANTED TO ALERT DOD TO POSSIBILITY THAT AN EARLY MEETING BETWEEN MOD VANDEN BOEYNANTS (VDB) AND SECRETARY RUMSFELD MIGHT BE REQUIRED TO ADDRESS ISSUE ON HIGH. GEN DEDEURWAERDER MADE TWO STATEMENTS CONCERNING POSSIBLE VDB-RUMSFELD MEETING. ONE (1) SHOULD THE PAYMENT SCHEDULE ISSUE MOVE TO THE MOD/SECDEF LEVEL, THE U.S. SHOULD NOT EXPECT THAT MINISTER VDB WILL CARRY WITH HIM A READY SOLULION. HE HAS NEITHER THE FISCAL NOR POLITICAL FLEXABILITY TO OFFER AN EASY SOLUTION. TWO (2) GEN DEDEURWAERDER WOULD LIKE TO ADDRESS PAYMENT SCHEDULE AS EARLY AS POSSIBLE SO THAT A DECISION CAN BE MADE WHETHER OR NOT TO RAISE ISSUE TO MOD/SECDEF LEVEL. IF AN MOD/SECDEF MEETING IS REQUIRED IT SHOULD TAKE PLACE PRIOR TO 12 JAN. AS MINISTER VDB WILL BE TAKING HIS OVERALL DEFENSE BUDGET TO PARLIAMENT FOR HEARINGS BEGINNING 12 JAN 77 AND IT WOULD BE UNLIKELY HE COULD MEET WITH SEC RUMSFELD PRIOR LO THE JAN 20TH TRANSITION TO NEW SECDEF. GEN DEDEURWAERDER SUGGESTED 8 JAN 77 AS A POSSIBLE DATE FOR MEETING, IF REQUIRED.

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6. GEN DEDEURWAERDER MADE THIS COMMENT IN CLOSING. IF THE BAF HAD THE MONEY THEY WOULD AGREE TO ANY REASONABLE PAYMENT SCHEDULE AS THE BAF AND GOB WANT THE PROGRAM TO MOVE AHEAD IN A POSITIVE FASHION. MAYBE THE BAF AND THE GOB WERE TOO OPTIMISTIC AND FORECAST THEIR FUNDING TOO LOW IN THEIR DESIRE TO MAKE THE PROGRAM SUCCEED POLITICALLY. EVEN IF THIS WERE TRUE, AND GEN DEDEURWAERDER WAS NOT CERTAIN IT WAS, THE PROBLEM IS STILL THERE AND ALLHOUGH HE PERSONALLY BELIEVES POSILIVE WORK WILL FIND A SOLUTION, THE SOLUTION WILL NOT COME EASY. AS A FINAL REMARK, GEN DEDEURWAERDER SAID THE BAF NEED NOT BE IN AN HURRY, LIKE SOME OF THEIR PARTNERS, TO SIGN THE LOA. BEFORE I COULD GET HIM TO EXPAND ON THAT LAST REMARK, THE AIDE CAME IN TO TELL GEN DEDEURWAERDER THE ARMY DEP COFS HAD BEEN WAITING TO SEE HIM AND THE MEETING ENDED. RENNER

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